



Sociocultural Expression of National Identity of the Karakalpak People

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Abstract

This article briefly presents the history of the Karakalpak people, provides some historical data on the origin of the Karakalpak people, their socio-cultural characteristics, human aspects and national mentality. From a sociological point of view, the daily and cultural life of the Karakalpak people was analyzed, which is reflected in the social space, its tendency towards national identity, the social nature of the Karakalpaks as the historical and socio-cultural identity of an ethnic group in interactions and relationships. The authors consider the cultural life of the Karakalpaks, which expresses the national identity of the Karakalpak people. The article also emphasizes the need for a theoretical understanding of the features of social reality due to the fact that with the development of modern society, new phenomena arise that affect the national mentality of the people, the development of civil society in the Republic of Karakalpakstan. In connection with these phenomena, there is a growing need to support multi-ethnic relations and citizenship. The authors note that the acceleration of the development of the information society, the factors of migration in the Republic of Karakalpakstan also require an in-depth analysis of the current state of development of civil society, multi-ethnic relations and the need to support citizenship. Indeed, as globalization intensifies, so does the need to preserve local identity.

Keywords: *Identity; Karakalpak People; Republic of Karakalpakstan; Socio-Cultural Ties; Social Relations and Interactions; Ethnic Identity; Sociological Approach; Historical Analysis*

1. Introduction

In modern sociological science, social anthropology, the study of identity issues occupies one of the leading places. Today, in the modern world, research on identity has gone far beyond these disciplines and is of interest not only for sociologists, ethnologists, ethnographers, political scientists, but also for scientists engaged in other fields of science. En Karakalpaks ethnic identity is also of such interest.

The modern Republic of Karakalpakstan is located in the northwestern part of the country in the lower reaches of the Amu Darya on the southern shore of the Aral Sea. The Karakalpaks are a Turkic-speaking people, formed among the steppe tribes who lived in antiquity and the Middle Ages in the vast delta regions of the Amu Darya and Syr Darya, in the Aral Sea region and the northern Caspian region, in

the zone of constant contacts with the population of Central Asia, Western Siberia and Eastern Europe. Karakalpaks occupy the southern coast of the Aral Sea and the Amu Darya delta. This area was developed by the Karakalpaks in the 18th-19th centuries. Prior to that, the Karakalpaks occupied the territory in the lower reaches of the Syr Darya.

According to 1996 data, the population in the Republic of Karakalpakstan was 1 million 416 thousand people. Of these, the Karakalpaks accounted for 35%, Uzbeks - 32%, Kazakhs - 20%, Turkmen - 5%. Small groups of Karakalpaks live in Bukhara, Andijan, Namangan, Samarkand, Tashkent and Surkhandarya regions. [17, P.6]

At present, the total land area of the republic is 166.6 thousand square kilometers. In Uzbekistan, the land area of Karakalpakstan is the largest in comparison with other regions. The size of the territory of our republic surpasses many countries of Western Europe, for example, Greece, Iceland. [24, P.3.]

As of 2019, the total population of the Republic of Karakalpakstan is 1,853,500 people, including:

- Karakalpaks - 32.1% of the total population,
- Uzbeks - 32.3%,
- Kazakhs - 26.3%,
- Other people's living in the region, including: Turkmen, Koreans, Tatars, Russians, Ukrainians and others make up about 9.3%. [1, C. 32].

It should be noted that 1936 (December 5) forever remained on the pages of history as the year of political events in the history of Karakalpakstan. The Karakalpaks, who foresaw the prospects of their chosen path, this year determined their future by joining Uzbekistan. During the years of our country's struggle for independence on December 1, 1989, along with the Uzbek language, the Karakalpak language received the status of the state language. Article 4 of the Constitution of the Republic of Karakalpakstan [13], adopted in 1992, states that the Karakalpak language and the Uzbek language are the state languages of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. The Republic of Karakalpakstan ensures respect for the languages, customs and traditions of all nations and peoples living on its territory, and creates conditions for their development.

After Uzbekistan gained independence, due to the special attention paid to national, ethnic and civic identity in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, the Karakalpak language was declared the state language in the Republic of Karakalpakstan along with Uzbek and enshrined in the Constitution. A citizen of the Republic of Karakalpakstan is also a citizen of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The administrative-territorial structure of the republic includes 15 districts: Amudar'inskiy, Beruniyskiy, Karauzyakskiy, Kegeyliyskiy, Kungradskiy, Kanlikulskiy, Muynakskiy, Nukuskiy, Takhtakupirskiy, Turtkulskiy, Khodjeyliyskiy, Chimbayskiy, Shumanayskiy, Bozatauyskiy, Ellikkalinskiy and the capital Nukus. [13]

The Karakalpaks have long lived on the shores of the Amu Darya, the Caspian and Aral seas. Although the climate of the region is typical of northern conditions, it consists of a sharply continental imbalance. Due to deserts and semi-deserts, steppes and oases, the climate here is more difficult than in other parts of Uzbekistan. Naturally, the specificity of the climate, in turn, is reflected in the mentality and lifestyle of the inhabitants of the region. Since ancient times, the Karakalpaks have been engaged in cattle breeding, fishing and hunting. Since the middle of the twentieth century, important agro-industrial sectors such as cotton growing and viticulture, agriculture, and horticulture have been rapidly developing.

In the era of our era, the Karakalpaks, like other peoples of Central Asia, converted to Islam. The Karakalpaks, according to their beliefs, are Sunni Muslims, Turks. Emphasizing the role of madrasah as a social institution in the religious identity of the Karakalpaks, the famous researcher Makset Karlybaev [12] emphasizes that the spread of Islamic teachings among the local population, especially in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, reflected the social status of the Karakalpaks.

The history of the origin of the Karakalpaks covers long periods. In the VIII-IX centuries BC on the northwestern and northeastern borders of Khorezm lived nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes of Saks Massagets, Savromat-Sarmatians. Saki lived in the north of Kizilkum, in the center of the Sultan Uvais mountains, on the banks of the Yangidarya and Inkardarya rivers, on the banks of the Uzbay river. According to the Greek historian Strabo, the Massagets lived in latitudes on the eastern coast of the Caspian Sea, right up to the Aral Sea. The courage shown by Tumaris, queen of the Massagets, is well known in 530 BC when the Iranian king Cyrus II attempted to invade the Aral Sea region.

According to Chinese sources, the Chinese Empire always paid a compromise tax to the Massaget confederation, which belonged to the ancient ancestors of the Karakalpaks.

II. Main Part

As relations between the state and society develop, the issues of identity, belonging and similarity in social space and social time become more complex and urgent. Beginning in the mid-1980s, the decline of the countries of the socialist system and the subsequent disintegration of most of them dramatically increased the number of ethnic groups turning to their own history. Accordingly, the repeated “budding” of such traits as national mentality, national character, national identity, national psyche was developed in search of an answer to the question: “Who is who in reality?”. While identity is formed on the basis of historical memory, in some regions and countries it can be exaggerated due to deep emotional passions.

The identity of the Karakalpaks was also realized and regulated by the measure of social time in the social space on the basis of deep thought and wisdom, hereditary relations between generations characteristic of many peoples of Central Asia.

F. Tennis was the first to use the term “social space” in sociology, and sociologists G. Simmel, P. Sorokin, P. Bourdieu, P. Shtompka analyzed the problems of social space from the point of view of ethnosociology and cultural anthropology. [3, 5, 8] Initially, the concept of “social space” was understood as the unity of the country’s population. In the process of self-expression and formation of a person, the degree of interaction between society and nature, the mechanisms of regulation of social processes and events, reflecting the special conditions of life, is understood. [3, P.223] Social space has a substantial and structural character.

Substance (people) in social space - includes individuals, social groups and organizations involved in social relations. Structural social space is structural relationships (ethics, laws, rules, customs, relationships, etc.) that have high individual significance. Social space is multidimensional, it consists of “territorial space”, “ideal space” (ideas, worldview) and “space of artifacts (artificially created human labor)”.

In the process of recognizing the national, ethnic, religious, civil, professional affiliation and identity of the Karakalpaks, these aspects have been formed, and serious steps are being taken to adapt them to the requirements of the globalizing world. In this context, the definition of citizenship, which is an important aspect of national identity, gives rise to the need for theoretical analysis, since the need to maintain ethnicity and form national, that is, civic identity remains undeniable. At the same time, it should be noted that the growing interest in national identity in recent years has led to many contradictions in global perspectives.

During the years of independence in Uzbekistan, the acceleration of the process of self-realization and the acquisition of scientific content at the same time provided a broad constitutional opportunity for the Karakalpak people to develop ethnic identity, citizenship and religious identity. In particular, Chapter XVII of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan is fully devoted to the Republic of Karakalpakstan, article 70 of which reads: “The sovereign Republic of Karakalpakstan is part of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The

sovereignty of the Republic of Karakalpakstan is protected by the Republic of Uzbekistan". [14, P. 23] On December 14, 1990, at the IV session of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, the Declaration on State Sovereignty of the Republic of Karakalpakstan within the Republic of Uzbekistan was adopted. The sovereignty of the Republic of Karakalpakstan is under the protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan. This is reflected in the relevant articles of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan; it is also noted there that a citizen of Karakalpakstan is also a citizen of the Republic of Uzbekistan. And this, in turn, determines the essence of civic identity. [14, P.23]

At the same time, nationality and its political dimensions are systematically replaced in the thinking of citizens by ethnic, religious or ordinary cultural thinking. Also, the problem is aggravated by the existing contradictions in the use of ethnic and quasi-ethnic situations (when a person ties himself to a certain ethnic group by his parents) in academic discourse, as well as in official scientific discourse. This is also an urgent issue from the point of view of satisfying the existing practices of forming citizenship based on needs, and support for positive ethnicity among the Karakalpak population is distinguished by additional complexity and uniqueness. Ethnicity and citizenship here form a complex symbiosis for political and historical reasons. This symbiosis of categories is filled with a certain emotional and evaluative content, which, in turn, leads to additional complications in the process of belonging.

In the history of new Uzbekistan, a comprehensive study of the past and present of the Karakalpak people, their way of life and thinking, their social, economic and spiritual world has found and continues to be reflected in a number of scientific works. [10, 11]

The people of Karakalpakstan take their place in the world as a nation with their own national culture, unique art, classical literature, spiritual will, a national code program in mind and thinking, as well as traditions. Its history, literature and folklore constitute a system of interrelated ideas and theories, traditions and values accumulated over the centuries. In this sense, the mentality and identity of the Karakalpaks is an independent world, which is the object and subject of its study in the field of social sciences, including sociology. Indeed, the Karakalpak people are an integral part of a sociological object reflecting ethnic and national characteristics, studied as a symbol of local history and extensive history in the context of political, socio-economic and cultural development. Because from ancient times to the recent past, the Karakalpaks have created a systemic and structural space of the vast heritage left by their ancestors in the Central Asian region.

To our contemporaries living in our country, the myths surrounding medieval European history, or the Internet, can often seem more interesting and even more important than knowing the city or village in which they were born or raised. If we look at the modern identity of the Karakalpaks, they have a "childish" interest in the place where they were born and raised, the life of many peoples can be perceived as a sign of devotion, in contrast to the "centralization around megacities" (capitals), which is reflected in the modern way their lives.

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh.M. Mirziyoyev, assessing the changes that took place during the reconstruction of the city of Muynak, draws attention to the fact that "... to live in the Aral Sea region, to try to preserve your identity while living there, can be considered a great courage!". [4]

Folklore and musical styles of the Karakalpaks embody the way of life, study of local lore and regional and geographical features of this people, formed directly in the process of socio-historical and socio-cultural development. If we look at the genres of Karakalpak music, they are colorful and diverse. In particular, the "Zhyrau-baksy" style occupies a special place in the expression of the ethnographic way of life of the people.

The "Zhyrau-baksy" style is an ancient trend performed on the musical instrument "kobyz", which is a symbol of the musical culture of the Karakalpaks. Kobyz is a two-stringed bowed wooden instrument with an open resonator (its bucket-like body is only half tightened with a leather soundboard). The strings

of the instrument are made from bundles of horsehair. Kobyz publishes matte "cosmic" sounds and inherently accompanies the guttural singing of the narrator of epics - zhyrau. It is a compact instrument that easily fits into a travel bag, it consists of two separate parts (body and neck), which in ancient times was associated with the nomadic way of life of the narrator. The kobyz is played with a short bow. This instrument was used in ancient times by the steppe zhyrau-baksy for various rituals. Currently, zhyrau-baksy perform epic and folk songs.

It should be noted that the II-International Baksy Art Festival was held in the city of Nukus from September 17 to September 23, 2021. Dozens of performers from different countries gathered in the ancient land of Karakalpakstan to show and discuss their art at the republican and international levels. And also - to contribute to the revival and development of creative schools, transferring the skill of performance and traditions of bucks by the method of "Mentor-student".

Karakalpak zhyrau and baksy, kissakhans-songwriters and musicians devoted all their strength and energy to this craft, devoted their entire adult life to it, passing from father to son, from generation to generation, the secrets of their performing skills.

We also note that the national Karakalpak dances occupy a special place in our national art. When Karakalpak boys and girls dance, their beautiful, graceful, energetic movements attract the attention of fans and experts. The performances of Karakalpak artists at large-scale public events and major conferences of state importance in our country attract the attention of many. Performances of Karakalpak artists in the genres of modern "variety", especially "opera", are successful in the international arena and contribute to the growth of the prestige of national art. For example, Zhanibek Piyazov is known throughout the world as an opera singer, as a performer of folk songs of the Karakalpak people.

In the Karakalpak national musical ensembles, local musicians created a symbiosis of musical compositions, combining such musical instruments as kobyz, bulamon, shynkobyz with Uzbek musical instruments rubab, tor, doira, gidzhak, dutar, chang, nai and other musical instruments. As a result, these musical instruments are in harmony with each other, and the "melody" emitted by them also sounds in its own color.

The style of Karakalpak music differs from other musical styles by its originality. For this reason, scientific research and broad promotion of the Karakalpak style of music will further enrich our spiritual world. [19]

III. Results and Discussions

The art and culture of the Karakalpaks has a very deep and rich history. It includes a mixture of cultural traditions of the peoples of Central Asia, the origins of art. The unique way of life and customs of the people have evolved and improved over the centuries on the basis of national and local folklore. His unique mysterious features and his graceful style stand out. Speaking about the intangible cultural heritage of Karakalpakstan, first of all, it is necessary to recall the rich folklore of this people with a long history, in particular folklore, epics, epics and folk music. Admittedly, it has been several years since 100 volumes of Karakalpak folklore, collected and published by Karakalpak scientists, education, art and culture figures over the years, were handed over to students. Listening to epics, songs, folk tales, stories, as well as legends that are included in this encyclopedic collection and performed at various ceremonies, which are sung in the unique style of local bucks, you will witness the great past and history of the Karakalpak people.

Pottery, carpet weaving and wood carving are widely developed among the local population, and the activities of these masters are widespread in the ancient cities of Khojeyli, Turtkul, Shabbaz, Chimbay. For this reason, in the opinion of the professionals living here, many streets in these areas are called "craft", "pottery", "carpet weaving", "art". We also emphasize that during archaeological excavations carried out

by expert archaeologists, ceramic artifacts were discovered, indicating that the crafts in this region go far into the past.

Ancient folk carpet weaving arose as a result of inventive efforts based on long hereditary traditions. Homemade rugs, which are mostly handcrafted by women, are a simple yet perfect expression of art that summarizes color and finishes. Forms of subtle patterns give rise to important artistic combinations and harmony of various color schemes.

The art of woodcarving is also widely developed in Karakalpakstan, and woodworking by local craftsmen is carried out at a high level of taste and skill. The art of wood carving is represented by local craftsmen through plant motifs and is a popular type of Karakalpak wood carving art. Maple, mulberry, walnut, elm, cherry or apricot were also used in carving. Naturally, an important program was the Decree of the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan I. Karimov "On further support for the development of folk arts and crafts", adopted on March 30, 2010. At present, out of more than 300 craftsmen working in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, 25% are young people and 50% are women. They actively participate in various competitions and festivals held in our country and abroad, and make a worthy contribution to the popularization of our national culture.[18]

Conclusion

The contradictions and disagreements of the historical period have become one of the most acute topics of our time, embodied in the thesis: "The end of the XX century as a preface to the XXI century". This theme also manifested itself in a series of expressions of the special mentality and identity of the Karakalpaks. People living in peripheral and ecologically unfavorable regions of the republic naturally think about the future of their children, as well as about their fate and the place where they were born and raised, closely following any changes that occur in it.

As the eras change, a new era of stability and restoration begins, ethnic identity is again perceived in the human imagination as serious as the "systemic crisis" of the 1990s, and they are trying to get away from it. Naturally, government policy plays an important role in this. In this case, there is a reason to express the theory of "confidence in the future" by Antonio Gramsci. To do this, a person must feel that he has the opportunity to act in accordance with the social time that he or she lives in the space that determines his or her way of life. The main source of this activity is explained by the fact that people live in an information society, are connected by a network of interactions, and have access to the boundaries of the local social environment. The study of conditions is also a prerequisite for overcoming dependence on these conventions. Exploring local communities through a "perspective" is a bold step towards decentralization. It is an opportunity to wash away the stains that have created the popular perception of a highly centralized country as "second class".

Researchers studying the daily life of ethnic groups strive to demonstrate an interesting social phenomenon and form a new social theory by interpreting it.

Sociology trains in a person social memory and social outlook, sociological imagination in him. With its help, a person looks at his social relations and through these relations - at his time. While this is a small problem that the social sciences claim, how it is implemented at the moment is a major problem. The purpose of social history is to develop an understanding of who is doing the research and to allow someone to read the results. As a factor in the study of ethnic identity, a researcher turns to respondents for any indicator, and on the basis of a certain text, the society in which he lives has an idea of the nation, can deepen the needs of his imagination, can revise it, present other ideas, everyday conditions that are directed a thoughtful person who can analyze circumstances and his own social experience. One of the main questions is to form a team of people of different professions, ages, experiences who want to feel the country in which they were born, raised, lived and live, share their life experience and knowledge with others.

Developing a sociological approach to the identity of the Karakalpak people, we approached the problem on the basis of social history and methods of comparative anthropology. These methods require a socio-chronological approach to the study of events occurring in the historical process, and also show a causal relationship between events. Historicity makes it possible to shed light on how events took place, on the role of the individual in the development of society. The method of social history provides a basis for a deep understanding of current processes and a look into the future, based on an approach to the past, present and future of people as a single historical process.

Of course, the formation and development of a nation is a uniquely complex process that each period has a certain impact on. Indeed, in addition to language, culture, customs and values that are typological features of the nation, socio-political aspects also play an important role in this process and in the unification of the nation. In this process, it is also observed that a person, realizing his status as a nation, understands and accepts his fate in relation to the fate of the nation.

Thus, there is a growing desire to show and preserve nationality, which embodies situations such as understanding the identity of a people and nation, differentiation or identification of oneself from others. Naturally, the Karakalpak people and their identity are undergoing certain changes in the context of the information society and the globalized world.

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